

CLASS OPTIONS FOR THE DISCERNING ADVENTURER

TO INCLUDE THE "WAY OF THE UNMASTERED" FOR THE MONK, "OATH OF THE PEOPLE" FOR THE PALADIN, "ENFORGER" FOR THE ROGUE, AND "SCHOOL OF BATTLE" FOR THE WIZARD, AS WELL AS A HOST OF WARLOCK INVOCATIONS AND FIGHTING STYLES FOR MARTIAL CLASSES

PRESENTED BY PIXEL AND THE PEN

MONK – WAY OF THE UNMASTERED

"Unmastered" is technically a misnomer; what matters for an unmastered monk is not that they are unschooled, but that they act according to their own code rather than pledging themselves to a school, a lord, or a code of honor.

These monks often end up itinerant problem-solvers, becoming the stuff of legend due to their combination of peerless skill and uncompromising ideals. (That's not to say that those ideals are always good, mind you; many choose to act solely for themselves.)

An unmastered monk may have a personal or cultural name for the path she follows, such as a drifter or a ronin. Some monasteries have their own names for those who choose to become outcasts in this manner as well.

TREAD DOWN THE SWORD

Starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain proficiency with two additional one-handed or versatile weapons of your choice, and can use these weapons with your Martial Arts class feature. In addition, when you successfully hit a creature with a monk weapon (but not an unarmed strike), you can spend 1 ki point to impose one of the following effects:

- It must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be disarmed.
- It must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or receive disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls for two rounds.
- It must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be subject to the effects of a *hunter's mark* spell for 5 rounds, on which you do not need to concentrate.

WAITING FOR THE INITIATIVE

At 6th level, you can seize the initiative from the enemy on a failed strike. When an enemy's attack misses, you may spend 1 ki point as a reaction to make an attack with a monk weapon. If you took the Dodge action this turn, you may instead use your reaction to make an attack with a monk weapon under these circumstances at no cost.

NO MASTER, NO NAME

Beginning at 11th level, you can't be unwillingly recognized unless a creature uses its action to inspect your appearance in detail. The creature must succeed on an Intelligence (Investigation) check against your ki save DC. You can spend a ki point to increase the difficulty of this check by 5 as a reaction to the check.

In addition, you can't be the subject of divination spells and can't be perceived by magical sensors unless the caster has a piece of your body or a highly personal possession, such as a piece of well-worn jewelry or a childhood treasure. These items no longer modify your saving throw against these effects, but are instead necessary to cast the spell successfully at all.

ONE STRIKE, ONE KILL

Starting at 17th level, when you successfully hit with a monk weapon during an Attack action, you may spend 3 ki points to do an additional 5d10 damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, you may make an extra attack this turn as part of your Attack action.

FAQ/Hooks/Who Does This Serve?

The Way of the Unmastered is an excellent fit for characters who want to evoke the classic tropes of samurai or Western movies, wandering the world and solving problems through simple wisdom and one or two weapons of choice.

The increase in available weapon options primarily provides an early-game damage boost, and some new options aesthetically. It also opens up some ranged weaponry for the Martial Arts class feature. If a setting contains firearms, the Unmastered monk makes an ideal gun-user among monks. (This does blunt the monk's melee damage powerhouse status, but also makes the monk a very strong mid-range combatant.)

If you're having difficulty finding story hooks for the party's Unmastered monk, consider some of the following:

- A "problem" the wanderer thought solved in another town has come back seeking vengeance.
- The monk's school takes poorly to those who leave, and wants to protect its secret techniques... or simply punish his transgression.
- An unmastered monk of a very old race, such as an elf, may have an old, messy life full of old, messy activities.
- The wanderer's exploits may have attracted a fan! How does this drifter handle an injection of energy and enthusiasm into her life?

These are far from the only hooks, of course, but can provide a starting point for a DM who's stumped by the ethereal wanderer, or a player who isn't sure how to take the concept in an interesting direction.

PALADIN – OATH OF THE PEOPLE

Paladins who pursue the Oath of the People focus their efforts on uplifting the common folk. While almost every paladin is encouraged to hold the people in their heart, these seek to break the chains of systemic injustices like poverty, racial tension, and oppression.

Depending on who they were before they felt their calling, these efforts may cost them much. These paladins usually work alone, rather than becoming part of an order; their callings are personal ones.

Such paladins often eschew the glory that other heroes of justice accrue, choosing to focus their efforts on stopping plagues or housing the homeless. The power to set the world to rights is a gift that should be shared, or so they think. Just as often, however, they end up blade-to-blade with those who cause, or allow, the intolerable conditions that let these conditions come to be.

When they do act, they almost invariably draw attention to themselves in a big way, taking the brunt of aggression. In the right circumstances, these paladins can become revolutionary leaders and folk heroes, toppling a truly vile current regime for the sake of its poorest citizens.

TENETS OF THE PEOPLE

Though the particulars often vary, the general sense of the Oath of the People goes as follows:

Protect the Innocent. Above all else, do not let those who have done no wrong come to harm.

Uplift the Downtrodden. Those who have nothing, or who face great obstacles in their lives, are the ones most in need of help. Those who have little choice but to commit wrongs to survive are worthy of your protection.

Punish the Corrupt. Your quest should point you, first and foremost, at those who create undue hardships for others, or who take unduly.

Live Righteously. Adhere to the same standards you would expect of others. While you are not obligated to poverty, do not take more than your fair share. Share what you do have to the extent that you can. Adhere to the standards of kindness, mercy, compassion, and bravery.

Speak Truth to Power. While you are not absolutely obligated to honesty at all times, you should be unafraid to lay the world plain and make criticism of those who would hurt others for their own gain.

OATH SPELLS

Level Spells

3rd *heroism, create or destroy water*

5th *branding smite, enthrall*

9th *create food and water, beacon of hope*

13th *freedom of movement, guardian of faith*

17th *geas, passwall*

CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

Heal the Sick. You can perform minor miracles, healing infirmities brought on by poverty or dishonorable acts. As a bonus action, each creature of your choice that can hear you within 30 feet of you is cured of any diseases or poisons currently affecting it, up to a maximum of your Charisma modifier.

Reveal the Darkness. As an action, you can reveal hidden things with your Channel Divinity. Within 60 feet of you, invisible creatures become visible, secret passages open, and creatures using Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide are revealed. This effect affects the area around you for 1 minute.

AURA OF PROTECTION

Starting at 7th level, creatures within 30 feet of you that you choose, excluding you, have resistance to damage from area-of-effect spells, attacks, and other damaging affects which target more than one creature, such as a dragon's breath or a fireball.

UNBREAKABLE WILL

Starting at 15th level, you have advantage on saving throws to avoid becoming charmed or frightened.

CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE

At 20th level, your presence on the battlefield is inspiring to all those who fight for justice. You can use your action to gain the following benefits for 1 hour:

- You have advantage on saving throws against spells.
- You have advantage on Constitution saving throws, as do your allies within 30 feet of you.
- You can use a bonus action on each of your turns to allow an ally within 30 feet of you to take the Attack or Dash action immediately.

FAQ/Hooks/Who Does This Serve?

The Oath of the People is for paladins who want to be both upright and keenly personal, in a way that the Devotion paladin is not necessarily.

The paladin who has sworn an oath to the people copes better with intrigue and dastardly tactics than another paladin might, albeit by exposing them or bypassing them rather than by partaking of them, necessarily.

Thanks to its spell selection, it also performs well in the interaction and exploration spheres, doing a serviceable job of dealing with basic problems like food and water.

ROGUE - ENFORCER

Enforcers form the support structure for thieves, assassins, and other shady characters. More physically-inclined than a typical rogue, these brutes eschew charisma and grace in favor of underhanded maneuvers and heavy weaponry. Many become pirates or brigands, taking what they desire by force rather than finesse.

Most enforcers find the knives and hand crossbows so beloved of their smaller counterparts to be distasteful at best, and outright absurd for combat at worst. Such a rogue would sooner use a dagger to pick his teeth than solve his problems.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency with medium armor, shields, and martial weapons.

BRUTAL STRIKE

Starting at 3rd level, you can apply brute force with deadly precision. You can use your Sneak Attack when making an attack with one-handed or versatile weapons other than finesse or ranged weapons, including your unarmed strike. In addition, you don't need advantage on your attack roll or an additional hostile creature within 5 feet of the target to use Sneak Attack if you are making an opportunity attack.

DIRTY TRICK

Starting at 9th level, you can set up your own openings for a successful strike. You can use a bonus action to strike a creature within 5 feet of you in a sensitive area, throw sand in its eyes, or otherwise bully it with your physicality or environment.

That creature must make a Dexterity or Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your Strength modifier + your proficiency bonus). On a failed saving throw, the next melee weapon attack or unarmed strike the creature makes gains disadvantage, and your next attack on the creature gains advantage.

POWERFUL PHYSICALITY

Starting at 13th level, you can use a bonus action on your turn to gain advantage on the next Charisma (Intimidate) check you make, and may add your Strength modifier as well as your Charisma modifier to the roll. You can also use a bonus action on your turn to gain advantage on the next Strength check you make to break free of bonds, break an object, or force open a stuck, locked, or barred door or chest. Other similar Strength checks may also receive this benefit at the GM's discretion.

STOPPING POWER

Starting at 17th level, you become an imposing target to try to pass by. When you make an opportunity attack against a creature, it must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your Strength modifier + your proficiency bonus). On a failed save, the creature's speed is reduced to 0 for one turn and it is knocked prone.

FAQ/Hooks/Who Does This Serve?

The Enforcer focuses on a mechanical-ecological niche as much as it does an aesthetic one; it offers a broader range of ambush-damage concepts to the rogue. If you've ever wanted to open up a fight by rabbit-punching someone in the back of the head, the Enforcer is a great place to look.

Its focus on opportunity attacks enables it to ruin the day of someone who wants to run up to a ranger, sneakthief, or ranged fighter, since in principle they have to get past the Enforcer first.

Aesthetically, meanwhile, it makes a good place to put the "muscle" of a team of thieves, especially if that muscle is comfortable in another aspect of thievery as well, such as talking or picking locks.]

Though it's framed primarily as a member of an organized crime syndicate, don't let that limit your imagination. The enforcer might be a trained soldier who never quite fit in as a scout nor a heavy, or a convict who earned her muscles during a long prison stay.

Having trouble hooking an enforcer rogue into your campaign? Try a few of these sample pitches:

- That job that got her convicted? It turns out the mark now wants her help getting back at the rest of the squad... and has a line on real freedom.
- An old buddy has yet another get-rich-quick scheme. The trick is, it involves posing as a soldier to get in good with these goody-two-shoes adventurers...
- Going straight is rough. He's heard tell that adventurers need to be tough, and they usually want someone who can handle traps, too...

Again, while these are hardly the only hooks for an enforcer, these can help you get started if you're just not seeing the place for one in an adventuring party. Remember -- the enforcer is still a rogue, just... mortgaging a little dexterity to be scary.

WIZARD – SCHOOL OF BATTLE

Some wizards find the power of their minds ill-suited as protection on the road, and fear being caught unawares without their spellbooks. For these wizards, the School of Battle provides a path to safety and security, marrying blade and spell without distracting so much from their studies. These wizards often become masters of channeling energy into objects mundane and magical, and learn to focus through even intense pain.

They trade away much for the sake of their bodily strength, however. Few develop the facility for a single school of magic that their peers do, and they are often incapable of the fantastic effects a master transmuter or evoker can muster. Many of them, thus, choose to become marshals rather than master wizards as they grow in renown, serving as trainer, outfitter, and moral support for novices of any field they so choose.

STUDENT OF BATTLE

Beginning when you select this school at 2nd level, you gain proficiency with simple weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields. You also gain proficiency in two martial weapons of your choice.

ENSPELL BLADE

At 2nd level, you gain the ability to focus magical power through your weapon. As a bonus action, you can temporarily turn your weapon into a magic weapon, with no other benefits. This effect requires your concentration, as if you were concentrating on a spell, and lasts up to one hour. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Constitution modifier (minimum 1) until your next long rest.

If your weapon is already magical, when you hit a creature with an attack from the weapon, you can expend one spell slot to deal fire, cold, or lightning damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage is $2d4$ for a 1st-level spell slot, plus an additional $1d4$ for each spell level higher than 1st, up to a maximum of $5d4$.

EXTRA ATTACK

Starting at 6th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

SUPERNAL FOCUS

At 10th level, you gain proficiency in Constitution saving throws. In addition, whenever you make a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration on a spell, you have advantage on the roll.

FIRE AND SWORD

At 14th level, you make adroit use of magic in combat. Before you use your action to cast a wizard spell or cantrip which causes damage to a single target, you may make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

If that weapon attack hits, the target takes damage as if it had failed its save or been successfully hit with the spell or cantrip as well as the weapon. (The creature must still be a valid target for the spell.) This only applies to saving throws against the damage itself; additional saving throws to avoid a secondary effect happen as normal, and on a miss, the spell is still consumed.

FAQ/HOOKS/WHO DOES THIS SERVE?

The School of Battle is (one of many such homebrew, at this point) a wizarding tradition for those who want to take a more bookish approach to the marriage of steel and spell.

Unlike many other approaches, however, the School of Battle eschews grace in favor of sheer deadliness and brute force. Its ability to deliver magical damage and spell effects with its blade makes it less of an inversion of the Eldritch Knight and instead a closer cousin to the Paladin or Cleric, while still focusing on its nature as an arcanist.

Within wizard, the School of Battle's closest cousins are the transmuter (as the Constitution-heavy "wizard of things") and the evoker (as the damage-heavy "wizard of battle").

Aesthetically, School of Battle adherents make excellent use of backgrounds like Soldier and Folk Hero, and do quite well "relearning" how to move in armor and still cast spells effectively as of level 2. They may also be wizards who grow nervous or uncomfortable at the violence of the adventuring life and take up steel.

At high levels, School of Battle wizards have some unorthodox ways to deliver powerful spells like Finger of Death or Disintegrate, opening up new targets to these attacks. The potential waste of a high-level spell slot, however, makes for new tensions in taking these chances!

FIGHTING STYLES

The following fighting styles can be chosen by fighters, rangers, and paladins whenever they would choose a fighting style.

GRACE

When using a two-handed or versatile weapon in both hands and not wearing heavy armor, you can treat the weapon as if it had the finesse quality.

BULLY

When wearing medium or heavy armor, you can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only to take the Help action regarding an enemy within 5 feet of you.

RIDER

When riding a horse or other mount, you can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only to cause your mount to take an Attack action instead of a Dash, Dodge, or Disengage action.

WARLOCK INVOCATIONS

The following invocations can be chosen by warlocks any time they would normally choose an eldritch invocation.

BLINKING BLADE

Prerequisite: Pact of the Blade

Forming your pact weapon no longer requires an action, and you can create ranged weapons. Any weapon you form is loaded.

FETOR AND DECAY

Prerequisite: 9th level

You may cast *contagion* once using a warlock spell slot. You can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

THE MASTER'S TOOLS

You gain proficiency in three tools of your choice.

THE MASTER'S WORKSHOP

Prerequisite: 7th level

You may cast *fabricate* once using a warlock spell slot. You can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

TOME OF BLADES

Prerequisite: Pact of the Tome

The first ranged spell attack roll you make against a target within 5 feet each round does not have disadvantage.

WHAT IS PIXEL AND THE PEN?

Pixel and the Pen is a one-person tabletop design and copywriting company based out of Lynnwood, WA.

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